

## MEDICINES.

It is remarked by an able writer that "what-ever is good to cure disease, if given in season will prevent it."

Let the medical faculty try their medicines by this rule. Let them bleed, physic, starve, poison and blister men to *prevent* disease. What an absurdity!

The remark however is not true, even in regard to the best remedies. Our relaxant and astringent remedies are calculated to change the action of the organs to which they are applied. But, if the action of these organs is right already, any change in it would do more harm than good. For example, a constant drink for a length of time, of a strong decoction of oak bark, witch hazle, blackberry briar root, or grape vine, would produce consumption, and this in its turn would check or derange the digestive and nervous operations. So, a frequent and steady use of lobelia, in small quantities for some time, would too much relax and nauseate the system, and thus by depriving it of the relish for food and the power to take exercise (while under its influence), a weakness would be induced, which in its turn would be a susceptibility to disease. Again; cayenne increases the natural action of the organs; but, by a constant use of it when their action is high enough, they become fatigued, and are rather injured than benefited. Yet, What medicines ever surpassed our astringents, lobelia and cayenne, when wanted and judiciously applied, in restoring a healthy state to deficient or deranged organic action! Hence, we infer: That medicines were made to restore the sick, not to nourish the healthy; to increase the healthy operations of the system, but never to oppose them; that, like food and exercise, they can be injurious to the system, not in their nature and tendency, but only in their excess, and untimely administration; and, of course, they should be taken only when indicated by present sickness or its promonitory symptoms, not to guard against it while the system is healthy and vigorous.—

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## QUACKS AND QUACKERY.

Much has of late been said of quacks and quackery, first by men called doctors, and then by those who have learned to talk after them. Nothing sounds worse with many than the word quack, when applied to the man who cures the sick out of the common way of giving mercury, laudanum, blistering, bleeding, setons, issues, &c. Some have gone so far as to say they would not be cured by a quack, or any but a regular doctor.

At such a time as this, it is highly proper to find out the original meaning of the word quack, and apply it to such as deserve this title of disgrace. To be certain what the word means we must apply to some learned doctor of the regular order for an explanation. Dr. Parr, author of the London Medical Dictionary, shall be the man to decide for us. "He was Fellow of the Royal Society of London and Edinburgh, and Senior Physician of the Devon and Exeter Hospitals." These are his words: "QUACKS and QUACK MEDICINES. The appellation of *quack* arose from quacksilver, the German appellation of quicksilver, since on the first appearance of *Leus*, the irregular practitioners only employed this reputed dangerous medicine. At present, it is confined to those who sell a pretended nostrum, the preparation of which is kept a secret; but may be applied to every practitioner, who, by pompous pretence, endeavors to obtain the confidence which neither experience or success have entitled him to."

However much the meaning of a word may be varied, it is certain that the original meaning is the true meaning. It is certain, from Dr. Parr, that the word "quack" originally meant one who secretly dealt out quicksilver for medicine in certain cases. He might secrete it under a latin name or abbreviation, but whoever gave quicksilver for medicine was called a quack or dealer in quicksilver, or what is now called mercury, calomel, corrosive sublimate, or any other mercurial preparation.

Judge ye, readers, who are "quacks." According to Dr. Parr, quacks are just as numer-